

THE
SUFFICIENCIE
OF THE SPIRITS
TEACHING,
WITHOUT
HUMAN-LEARNING.

OR
A TREATISE, TENDING TO PROUE HU-
MAN-LEARNING TO BE NO HELP TO
the Spirituall understanding of the Word of God.

Written (if it may be) for the Silencing of such false and scanda-
lous reports, as have been rumored about concerning this
Matter; and also for the affording of true information
to all such as desire to know the Truth.

By SAMUEL HOW.

Prov. 14. 5. *A Faithfull witnesse will not lye, but a false record will speake lyes.*

Esay. 57. 14. *Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling blocke
out of the way of my people.*

Mal. 2. 1, 2. *And now o ye Priests, this Commandement is for you, if ye will not
heare it, nor consider it in your heart, to give glory to my name, (saith the Lord
of hosts) I will even send a curse upon you, and will curse your blessings, yea I
have cursed them already, because ye do not consider it in your heart.*

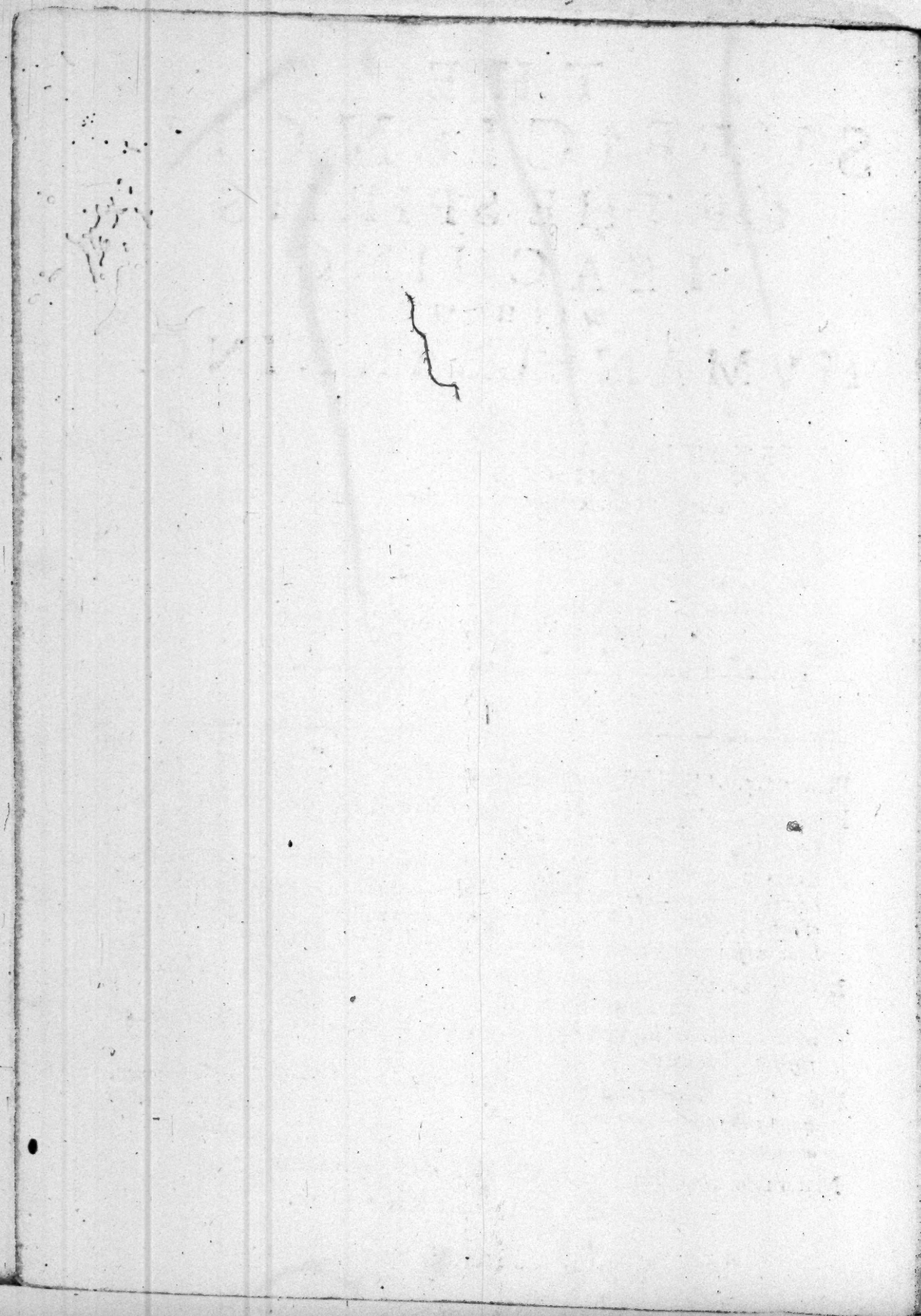
Mat. 11. 25, 26. *At that time Iesus answered and said, I thanke thee o Father,
Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and
men of understanding, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so Father because
thy good pleasure was such.*

Luk. 16. 15. *Then he said unto them, ye are they that justify your selves before men,
but God knowes your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed among men is
abomination in the sight of God.*

Mat. 11. 6. *And Blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.*

See also Esay. 29. 14. and Rev. 2. 24. 25.

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LOVE THE TRUTH IN SINCERITY,
LIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING BE
MULTIPLYED THROUGH
JESUS CHRIST.



GODS Gracious Promise it is (Christian Reader)
that by the * breath of his mouth, and the * 2 Thes. 2.8.
brighnesse of his comming he will reveale the
Man of Sin, and Sonne of Perdition: Yet thus
witnesseth the Spirit, that when it shall so come to
passe, that the Viall of Gods wrath shall be

* powred upon the Throne of the Beast, to the darkening of his
Kingdome, and discovering of those strong Delusions, whereby he hath
long deluded the world, that then the men of that throne shall gnaw
their tongues for sorrow, and shall blaspheme the God of
heaven. * Reve. 16. 10.
II.

All which to me appears to be fulfilled and made good concerning
this following Treatise: 1. that when as the Lord by his Word
the breath of his mouth hath blown out some smoake of the
bottomlesse pit, which I conceive to be Humane-Learning,
which is so much magnified, as being a helpe, whereby to
understand the mind of God.

This matter hath so vexed and tormented the men of that Throne,
that even He himselfe, at whose request I was moved to open this
portion of Scripture, 2 Pet. 3. 16. hath (as I am credibly informed)
reported about this City, that I made a Calfe (meaning a false and
unsound exposition) and when I had done danced about it; herein
exposing not onely me, but the very Truth it selfe, which I in this point
delivered,
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delivered, to the derision, and contempt, and Table-talk, of such, as
bad rather be deceived and believe their Learned Teachers (as men
call them) on their bare word (having the Faith of our Lord Jesus
Christ the Lord of Glory with respect of Persons), then to receive and
justify the Truth of God, if the Messenger be weak and contempti-
ble, and his message in power, much plainness, and demonstration of the
Spirit. And not beautified with the excellency of speech, and swelling words
of mans wisdom, which is enmity to God. It crosseth and opposeth
the simplicity of his way in the dispensation of the Glorious My-
stery of the Gospell. And therefore God hath said of it, as Symon
Peter said to Symon Magus, * Thou hast neither part nor lot
in this matter.

* AR. 8, 21
I Cor. I. 19.
† Ephes 5. 4.

But yet (me thinks) such men, & as would carry the shew of Godlinesse, should remember the Councel of the Apostle, that such Carriages are things not seemly; though for my owne part, I blisse the Lord for it, being to me a more strong confirmation, that I have the Truth on my side: For thus was † Jesus Christ our Lord served by the Wise and Learned Pharisees, when as he taught them such a Doctrine as pleased them not: And thus was Paul the Preacher of Righteousnesse dealt by of the leareed & Athenians, even for preaching Jesus, and the Resurrection. Likewise I read in Heb. ii. that thu in former times was part of the tryall, that the Lord exercised his Witnesses withall, even mockings, vers. 36. And therefore as our Saviour teacheth me, I have in this case great cause to be glad and rejoyce, for they having so served Jesus Christ my Lord, and his faithfull followers; then what am I, that I should be one of that number, that have so large † encouragement and reward promised: I shall therefore quietly passe by all such things, and onely * with Job in his distressed condition, crave that he and all you that have done this thing will suffer me to speake, and when I have spoken mock on; seeing as the ‡ Servant of God said, Indeed, because ye are the people onely, Wisdome must dye with you; so will I make bold to say to you also: Yet for all his understanding and such others as heard me, they fayled of their zeale for God, and his glory, in that they sought not to suppress and throw down that Calfe of dishonour, which must needs (being an Idol) be a very high provocation in the eyes of his Glory; which he that put me upon this Exercise having excepted against it, when it was finisht, and with much passion manifested his great dislike thereof before many witnesses, ought especially, and was obliged to have done, being then lovingly requested by a friend that was there present, for the satisfaction of all that Assembly to Instance (if not in all) yet at least in some particular Scripture wherein I had perverted

* Luk. 16. 14.

§ AB.17.18.

† Mat. 5. 12.
* Job. 21. 3

* 10b. 12.2.

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TO THE READER

pervorted it, seeing he had openly cast an Assertion on all that I had said; but neither he, nor any of his Profession, though many were then present, did undertake this taske, nor yet to this day, hath He, or any of them endeavoured it. So it may appeare my Errour was not so great, or none at all, that they could prove; or else their zeale to God and his Truth, and their Charity to Me and othes very small. And if there were a Calfe, It was their Humane-Learning and wisdom which the men of this Throne set up, and themselves danced about it, whilst I to their great grieve and discontent was labouring with all the power and might that God assisted me with, utterly to cast down, grind it to powder, and to blow it away with the word of God, with the breath of his mouth: Whether it be thus, or no, I commend now to the judgement of all such as love and know the truth; not doubting but there will be some found, that out of love will reprove what is amisse, and so turne the sinner out of the errour of his way, though some others, as * Job saith, forge lyes (as I could name divers) who are Physitians of no value.

For God who knows the hearts of all men, knows that it was not my intent at all at that time to have medled in this Argument, nor with this Scripture, not till the night before I spake of it, and all because I knew if I did, it would be offensive, as it hath proved; and what I did herein it was by the advice of Friends. But now I see that Gods hand was in it, and I doubt not but for good: though it is, and may be my portion deeply to suffer for it: and for men to be offended at the truth, and such as declare it, is no new thing, even for the builders themselves to stumble at the stumbling stone: But leaving all such to stand or fall to their own Lord.

Something remaines to be spoken concerning the matter following, for the preventing of such things as may further be objected against it.

1. Though the matter be the same in substance that it was at the first delivery, yet somewhat may be wanting, and n, which was then said; and more is added in other respects then at that time was spoken, which I thought fit to give notice of.

2. Another exception and that of great moment, n, that I have bl. sphemed against Jesus Christ, in saying, that He was without Humane-Learning.

Now besides what is answered hereunto in the first Objection belonging to the first Doctrine; if any yet remain unsatisfied, and will affirme the contrary, Let them declare, (as the Apostle saith) who was his Councellour, and who taught him, and he shall be recompenced: The Scripture tells us, that He grew in Wisdom and Stature, and so couples them alike together: Now none will affirme

* Job. 13.4.

* Psa. 118.22.
Aet. 4. 11.
Isay. 8. 14. 15.

* Rom. 11.
34. 35.

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that He Learned his Stature : then from the like will I affirme, that He Learned not His Wisdome, no more then He did His Stature ; and so if none taught him, then must it needs follow that He was without Humane-Learning, for we in common speech call them unlearned, which were never taught, as did the * Jewes ; and Learning presupposeth one to Teach, so that me thinks) it is but requisite, if any do so affirme, that they should declare his Teacher, which if they cannot doe, why then should they affirme Him to have Humane-Learning. And me thinks, the matter being rightly considered, it will be found blasphemy for any to affirme that He had Humane-Learning, seeing that in so doing, they call in question the perfection of His Manhood, as if there were others that could adde unto Him, seeing all grant that the Master is above the Scholler : and the Scripture witnesseth for me, that at ‡ 12 yeares old, such was His Wisdome observed amongst the Doctors, as that they were astonished at his understanding and answers ; and doubtlesse this was a part of their great wonder, seeing that He never Learned, as it was the Councels wonder also concerning ‡ Peter and John. Therefore for any to affirme Him to be by men taught, is to take that glory from Him which He had of His own, and so they are most like to be them that blaspheme.

3. It is also very likely that pride and vain-glory wilbe imputed to me, as it hath been already, that I being as I am, should undertake to maintaine that which all godly and learned men are contrary to me in.

I Answer, that it is no strange thing for the Servants of God to meet with such hard measure, even for declaring of the truth ; for so was Joseph § dealt by even of his Father and Brethren : and so was † David used for speaking for the Lord. And Paul you shall find was ‡ scoffed at by the learned Athenians : And seeing that it hath alwayes bin so with Gods Servants, why should not I affirme with the * Apostle, not to passe to be judged of men, whatsoever they be, though godly, wise, learned ; seeing that as the Apostle saith, it makes no matter to me, God is no ‡ acceptor of persons : And therefore I hold it a defence sufficient with David to say, ‡ Is there not a Canse ? seeing that there is none that I know of that will stand up for the Lord, against those that defie the host of Israel, because that they be not Goliath-like, Men of stature, having Boots of brasse, and such like furniture, as that the fleshly hearts of men dare not looke such in the face ; and all because that they bee so strongly furnished with Mans strength : Though that the Souldiers of the Lord of hosts, may
with

* Joh. 7. 15.

Acts 4. 13.

‡ Luke 2. 46,

47.

‡ Acts 4. 13.

Answer.

§ Gen. 37. 8.

10. 11.

† 1 Sam. 17.

28.

‡ Act. 17. 18.

* 1 Cor. 4. 3.

‡ Gal. 2. 6.

‡ 1 Sam. 17.

29.

TO THE READER.

with one blast of a Rammes horne, through the might of God;
 * blow down the strong Wall of this spirituall Jericho : seeing that
 the Lord hath said, that by the ‡ mouth of babes and sucklings
 he will perfite his praise, and this if Babes should neglect to doe,
 the stones would cry, whence is to be observed our Saviour descends
 from Babes to Stones, and not from Babes to Learned men, for he
 hath Chosen such to bring forth His Righteousnesse as the light;
 for He himselfe doth not despise the day of ‡ small things. Now
 these things considered, why should any with the proud § Pharisees
 disdain at what the Lord will doe; but lay their hands upon their
 mouthes and say nothing because He † doth it; And seeing it is the
 Lords ‡ doing, why should it not be Merveylous in our eyes :
 Though I doubt not but the Lord will in his good time bring forth
 one learned Moses, and another as excellent that wayes as was Paul,
 and cause them disclayming that Humane excellencie to magnifie the
 foolishnesse of God, * to be wiser then the wisdom of men, and so
 every way convince men of their folly this way to his prayse.

And in the meane while let them that can receive this for Truth,
 receive it, and let none be so conceited of Learned-men, as if the
 word of God came onely to them, and from them, as Paul
 said to ‡ some that were puffed up. But let such as are spirituall
 know that the Lord reveales his Mysteries to whom he pleaseth, and
 where he will; and therefore the eye of none should be evill be-
 cause he is good, but we should learne, as the Wiseman saith, that
 ‡ the race is not alway to the swift, nor the battell to the
 strong : but it may so prove. that little David without Sauls Armour
 onely with a Sling and a Stone through the Name of the Lord, may
 so wound great Goliath of Gath, the enemy of God and his people,
 as that he may receive his deadly wound, and ly groveling on the ground,
 to the dismayment of all the Host of the Phylistims, and great joycing
 of the Israel of God, and this the Stone that is hewen out of the Moun-
 taine without hands, is onely able to doe. Therefore let all that feare the
 Lord take heed that they leane not to their own Wisdome, but so much
 the more that any of us have Wisdome, and Vnderstanding, Memory,
 and such like naturall parts, above other, so much the more let us be
 watchfull and carefull over our selves, as knowing that the § Wis-
 dome of the flesh is enmity against God, and is ready to but
 against the Spirit : and now to draw to a Conclusion of all in the words
 of the Prophet, † The Lord frustrateth the tokens of the lyars,
 and maketh the Diviners madde, turneth wise-men backward,
 and maketh their Knowledge foolishnesse.

If

* Josh. 6.26.

‡ Mat. 21.16.

‡ Zach. 4.10.

§ Mat. 21.15.

† Psal. 39.

‡ Psal. 118.

23.

* 1 Cor. 1.25.

‡ 1 Cor. 14.

36, 37.

‡ Eccles. 9.11

§ Rom. 8.7.

† I say 44.25.

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If any shall except against the matter, for the rudenesse of it, as that it is without forme, or Learning, all such are to know that it is but sutable to the whole argument, and that if it should be otherwise, I should condemn that in practise which I justifie in words, and so make my selfe a trespasser. Thus I commit this my labour, with all those that out of love to the Truth shall seek information in this matter, to the blessing of the most High, and remaine an unfeigned wel-willer of all them that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. The 25 day of the First Moneth, 1639.

SAMUEL HOW.

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THE SUFFICIENCIE OF THE SPIRITS TEACHING, WITHOUT HUMAN-LEARNING.

The text, 2 PETER 3. 16.

As one that in all his Epistles speakes of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood: which they that are Unlearned and Vnstable, wrest, as they doe also the other Scriptures unto their own destruction.



THESE Words, that I am allotted to speake from at this time, have respect, as it should seeme, to such things as the Apostle had spoken of Before, which things seeme to me to be those that are contained from the beginning of the second Chapter to the end of the thirteenth verse of this third Chapter; and the foureteenth verse containes *Peters* exhortation, strengthened in the fifteenth verse, by his Brother *Pauls* writings; who in all his Epistles speaks of these things, as of the *comming of the Lord Iesus*, and other things, such as are herein contained; among the which (that is) *Pauls* writings in his Epistles, some things were hard to be understood, and so indeed was the *comming of Christ Iesus*,
B which

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2 Thes. 12. at
the beginning.

which it should seem was hard of them to be understood, and that appeares by his earnest writing to the * *Thessalonians*; where he exorts them *that they should not suddenly be moved; neither by Word, nor Epistle, as it were from him, as if the day of Christ were at hand, for there were many things to be fulfilled first, as a departure from the Faith, the rising up, the perfection and the conlumption of the Man of sinne: and this it should seeme though he had told them of it before, yet to them it was hard to be understood, which had the true Learning here meant, which things they that were Unlearned and Unstable, perverted as they did other Scriptures to their own destruction. Therefore the great thing here to be minded, is to find out what this learning is that Peter here intends. And, Secondly, who they be that are the unlearned ones: and by that we shall easily find who they be that are the perverters of the Scriptures to their owne destruction. For this end therefore I will consider what this learning is not, and then what it is.*

What Learning
it is not.

It is not Humane-Learning. That I may not be misconceived about it, I will here lay down my understanding in it; and by *Humane-Learning* I doe not mind the knowledge and understanding of our own language, which every man of what tongue soever he be, might in some measure be taught of another, as the Parents teach their Childen, and they learne of them: of this there is a naturall necessity, as the Apostle saith, *How shall they beleieve in him of whom they have not heard*; now the hearing there mentioned must needs be a naturall hearing, seeing it is set before Faith; and this hearing must needs be the understanding of the sound of words spoken. Now thus Peter and John, and all the rest learned the foolish things spoken of 1 Cor. 1.21.: and thus I acknowledg that there is none but in some measure have this learning, and must of necessity have it, to understand Gods mind in an ordinary way. But by *Humane-Learning* all along in this matter, which I oppose, It is the knowledge of Arts and Sciences, divers Tongues, and much reading, and a persisting in these things, soe as there-by to be made able to understand the mind of God in his Word; this is it that I condemn from the word of Truth, for being that by which any is made able spiritually to understand the mind of God, which the Apostle saith, cannot be attained to by the words which mans wisdom teacheth: all which, these excellencies are said to be. So that by *Humane-Learning* I doe here understand, that, whereby certain men doe excell, and are farre above

1 Cor. 2. 13.

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above and beyond other ordinary men; and in this sense doe I understand that the Councel Judged *Peter and John to be no such learned men*: For we in common speech doe oppose a learned man to one that otherwise can read and write in his own tongue, though he doe not understand the grounds of his own speech, as the other man that is learned doth, as may appeare by the Booke called the *English School-master*. And so such *learning* doe I not conceive to be here meant, which I conclude for these Reasons.

1. Because that then *Peter* must of necessity condemn himselfe, for he was a Man that in the * Councels knowledge was such an *unlearned man*, and so must needs himselfe lye under that blame that he layes upon others, therefore *Humane-Learning* is not here that which he intends.

2. Because *Humane-Learning* is a † rudiment of this world; hence is it that our Saviour acknowledgeth that his Mysteries were hid from the † Learned: but they were not hid from his Disciples, for unto them it was § given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdome. And the rudiments of this world are not after Christ, the Apostle tells us: therefore *Humane-Learning* cannot be it that *Peter* here minds.

3. Because the naturall man cannot † perceive the things of God, but a meere naturall man, may be a great worldly Learned man, as were the Egyptians, and Babylonians, and as are many of the Romish Priests and Jesuites; therefore for this cause, that is not the *learning* here meant.

4. Because such of Gods servants, as have had such kind of *learning*, when as they came to know Christ, they forsooke it all, as *Moses* when he came to age, though he was † learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, yet by Faith he forsooke all the treasures of Egypt, and this being one of Egypts treasures, he forsooke this also, for when he saith *treasures*, there none is excepted: therefore in asmuch as *learning* was one, aswell as riches and honours, he forsooke that also, as seeing by Faith a better treasure in the worst condition among the people of God, then in the best condition in the world, suppose it be *learning*.

The like is to be seen in *Paul*, who counted all things losse and dung that he might winne Christ, even the righteousness of the Law it selfe, which is farre beyond all this, and all this he did that he might know him: Wherein the Apostle gives me to understand, that all such things were but hinderances to keep him from the knowledge of Christ to salvation, which is it that

Act. 4.13.

1 Reason.
Act. 4.13.

2 Reason.
‡ Col. 2.8.
‡ Luk. 10.21.
§ Mat. 13.
Col. 2.8.

3 Reason.
‡ 1 Cor. 2.14.

4 Reason.
‡ Act. 7.22.

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here I mind also : therfore likewise this is not the *learning* here meant, seeing it was rejected of them, therfore it was no help nor furtherance to them to know *Christ* by; but lets and hinderances, and so much appears by those converts in *Acts* 19. 18, 19. *Who when they beleevd are said, such of them as used curious Arts, to burn their Books*, declaring that now they had met with *learning* of farre greater worth, then their curious Arts, and therfore now they burn their Books, declaring that now they had no more need of them, and so I conclude that such as this is not the *learning* here meant.

What Learning it is. I now come to manifest what *Learning* it is the Apostle here intended.

Now the *learning* here intended by the Apostle, it is as I understand, That *sound knowledge*, and *sure information* that every Christian hath in *Iesus Christ*, whereby he is so deeply rooted, and so surely grafted into him by Faith, as that he abides unmoveably settled in him, as therby he abides stable in the *sure knowledge* and *understanding* of the *word of Christ*, and so much here me thinks the Apostle gives us to understand, how that the *unlearned*, they be *unstable*: then on the contrary, the *learned* they are stable, beleeving, and being layd on the true Foundation, they shall never be confounded, or ashamed.

Now such as these are, that are *learned* as the truth is in *Iesus*, these may well say to the greatest worldly *learned* ones, as *Philip* said to the Eunuch, *Vnderstandest thou what thou readeest*: and not onely so, but such may teach them the understanding of the mystery, saying, these are taught and instructed by the teachings of the Spirit of God, agreeable to these Scriptures:

I Cor. 2. 10. * *That it hath not entred into the heart of man to conceive of that which God by his Spirit (which searcheth the deep things of God) hath reavealed unto us.* And this the Apostle further explaines, *that as no man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him: so the things of God knows no man, no not a worldly learned man, but by the Spirit of God*: and so he goes on to difference the spirit of the world, from Gods Spirit, and shewes, that, that is it, wherby the things of God are known, and also manifested to others: so that all the things of God both for matter and manner flow from the wisdom of Gods Spirit, and not what mans wisdom teacheth, which is to compare spirituall things and carnall things together, as *tongues*, and *ares*, and such like: but Gods Spirit teacheth us to compare spirituall things with spirituall things, and so he goes on and declares that onely such

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Such that are taught by the Spirit, are capable of true discerning of spiritual things, without being justly condemned of any, as truly having the mind of *Christ*, rightly and truly knowing the things that are of God, and with this agrees the witness of *Iohn*, * saying, *these things have I written unto you concerning them that deceive you*, whereby it appears they had deceivers about them, * 1. *Ioh. 2. 26.* and those things were written concerning such; But saith the 27. Apostle in opposition to their *deceivings*, ye have received the *Anoynting* of him that dwells in you; and this *anoynting* that they had received doth he oppose to their *deceiving*, as being able thoroughly to teach them so, *as that they needed not that any man teach them, save as that anoynting taught them*: then seeing that that *anoynting* never did teach them such *tongues* or *arts*, as were *humane*, therefore the Saints by the Apostles grant had not need of any such *learning*, and yet this *anoynting* taught all truth and obedience in it also. And yet further our ‡ Saviour ‡ 1. *Ioh. 16. 7.* himselfe concludes this point, shewing that when he hath sent the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth to them, that then he shall leade them into all truth: whence I doe conclude, that for the Disciples knowledge of the truth there, was no more necessary according to the mind of him that was Truth, but the Spirit of God to lead them into all truth without all error, teaching by no *humane* means: the Reason why is rendered, *because it is sufficient*, and that is because it speaks from the Father, agreeable to that of our Saviour taken from the Prophet, that ‡ we shall be all taught ‡ 1. *Ioh. 6. 45.* of God, and so indeed being taught of the Spirit, we are taught of the Father, and the Sonne also, which are all one; and so our learning comes to us, being taught of the Father, Sonne, and Spirit, for all our Instructors and Councillers, and this is all the learning that we need, to know the things that are of God by, agreeable to his will: so from these words thus interpreted, the Conclusion comes to this,

That such as are taught by the Spirit of God, destitute of Humane-Learning, are the Learned ones that truly understand the Scriptures according to Peters mind. Proposition.

I say, such as are taught by the Spirit, without Humane-Learning, are such persons as rightly understand the Word: And this (me thinks) the whole Council of *Ierusalem*, as wicked as they were, did in effect conclude, § considering § 4. *Act. 4. 13. 14.* Peter and *Iohn*, though *unlearned men*, yet they knew they had been with *Iesus* by their boldnesse, and so they had nothing to say

The Sufficiency of the SPIRITS teaching,

* Luk. 10. 21.
10. 24.

† Mat. 22.
23. 29.

1 Reason.

* 1 Cor. 1.
23. 24.
§ 1st. 19. 19,
21.

Ast. 17. 18. 23.

‡ Ast. 4. 12.

* 1 Cor. 2. 2.
G 6. 14.

say against it : and yet though men should oppose it, *Christ* *Iesus* our Lord * Justifies it, with great thankfullnesse to his Father, *that having hid these things from the wise and prudent, he had revealed them to babes* : Now that revealing must needs be by the Spirit, according to that 1 Cor. 2. 10. And on this manner is it that our Lord comfort, his Disciples telling them that *all things were given him of his Father to reveale*, and so in that regard he tells them that *blessed are the eyes that see that, that they saw*, which was as the Apostle saith, *God manifested in the flesh, which many wise men and Kings desired to see, but could not see it*, and so that was now made manifest to them, which before was hid from Wise-men and Scribes, and so was at the present also : for few of the Wise could attaine to the knowledge of Him and his Doctrine, as they did. Now with this also agrees what our † Saviour further affirms to the Sadducee, who by reason of their Wisdome and Learning thought to have intangled him, he tells them *that they erred not knowing the Scriptures*, for all their great Learning being destitute of Gods Spirit. Now by these Scriptures this poynt being thus confirmed, good Reason also may by Gods word be brought for the futher justifying of it, as

First, Because it is the good pleasure of God to place our salvation in great contempt and enmity to mans wisdome : hence is it that the Apostle saith, that he *preached Christ crucified to the Jewes a ‡ stumbling blocke, and to the Gretians foolishnesse*, for the Jewes we read in great contempt refused him, as Pilate bid them behold their § King ; presently they cry *away with him, away with him, Crucifie him* : and so when Pilate had wrote on the Crosse, that he was King of the Jewes, they tooke it as a great prejudice to them, and therefore wished him to write, *that he said he was the King of the Jewes*.

And so as Peter tells them in Acts 3, *they denyed him, and desired a murderer to be given them*, and to this agreed the Gentiles, for they had their hands also in his death : and we find that whenas Paul preached him at Athens, that then this saying of the Apostle here is made good both of Jewes and Gentiles : and indeed they both agree to hang him, betwixt heaven and earth, as being in their esteem worthy of neither, and yet even in this Crucified Iesus lyes contained the salvation of ‡ all (both Jewes and Gentiles) that are saved : and in this despised *Ie* *us* are all to rejoyce with the * Apostle, to *salvation* : for in him thus dishonourable and unmeet in mans wisdome, *lye hid all*

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1 Cor. 1. 24

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heavenly * treasures of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification * Col. 2. 3.
 and redemption: for he is the wisdom of God, and power of God, 1 Cor. 1. 20.
 Cor. 1. 24.

Another Reason why such as have Gods Spirit destitute of 2 Reason.
 humane-Learning come thus to know Gods mind, is, that (as the
 Apostle declares) no flesh should rejoyce in Gods presence: now
 is learning is but fleshly and carnall. Now the Apostles ad-
 vantage is, though we had known † Christ Iesus after the flesh; yet † 2 Cor. 5. 16.
 now comming to be after God, we should henceforth know
 him so no more: and here is a sufficient Reason, because know-
 ledge is subject to puffed up, as saith the § Apostle: Whenas § 1 Cor. 2. 8.
 we, and the Learning of the Spirit, keeps us low in our own
 eyes, and causeth, as Solomon saith, our minds to be good,
 making us furable to the Apostles exhortations, † saying, Be † Rom. 12. 16.
 not high minded, but make your selves equal to them of the lower sort;
 and not wise in your selves, but † let every man esteem others better † Phil. 2. 3.
 than himselfe: and if any glory, let him * glory in the Lord. Now
 that hath these things, as Humane-Learning and Wisdom * 1 Cor. 1. 31.
 more then another, let him weigh and consider duly with
 himselfe, whether he doth not think and conclude that he in
 regard of these things is not more to be respected then they † 1 Cor. 5. 6.
 that are without them: now then † this rejoycing is not good, † Rom. 4. 2.
 for it is a rejoycing in the flesh, and futable to † works, and so
 not of God: and yet so is it that for our hearts we cannot but
 think better of our selves for these things, then of others with-
 out them, & so we may see the Apostles words fulfilled, that the
 wisdom of the § flesh, that is, whatsoever the flesh is excellent § Rom. 8. 7.
 in, it is enmity to God, it is not subject to the Law of God, neither
 indeed can be.

Anoder Cause, why the Spirits teaching is sufficient without 3 Reason.
 humane-Learning, is, because, as the Apostle saith, we are com-
 plete in him, that is, perfect and full in him; and this he strength-
 ens yet further from this consideration, that he is the head
 of all Principalities and Powers, so that if there were any thing
 else, to make us compleat, he being the Head of all, we should
 have it: but he hath given nothing but his † Spirit to profit † 1 Cor. 12. 7.
 withall, therefore we are compleat by it alone; and therefore is it
 that Paul * exhorts Timothy to keep that which was commit- * 1 Tim. 6.
 ted to him, which was the Faith taught by the Word and 20. 21.
 Spirit, and wisheth him to avoyd and beware of Science, that
 is, all knowledge naturall, which is comprehended under „ phy- „ Col. 2. 8.
 sophy, learned, prophane and vaine babblings, and oppositions

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to the Faith of *Christ*, and so much is by the Apostle there declared, saying, *which while some have lusted after, they have erred from the Faith*: so that it is most plain and cleare, that these things are so farre from perfecting men, or helping of them in the knowledge of the *truth*, as that they hinder and cause such as professe them to erre from the Faith: even all the seaven Liberall Sciences, for all be but Science, and all this Science or knowledge is falsly sayd to be of use in the Gospel; Profane and vaine babblings are farre better names for them, and oppositions, according to *Pauls* teaching, and he faith of himselfe, *I thinke I have the Spirit of God*, and so indeed he had without doubt, and so our ground remaines good, *that we are compleat in Christ Iesus*.

4 Reason.

* 1 Cor. 3. 18.

Another consideration confirming this Conclusion, is from the Apostles * advise, *let no man deceive himselfe*, and that in the true way of attaining *wisdom*; he declares what it is in these words, *that such a one is to become a foole that he may be wise*, and how 's that, but by knowing that indeed there is nothing in all mans *wisdom* to be any whit helpfull but hurtfull to him in attaining and comprehending the *wisdom* of God in *Christ*: Now what is more foolish to a man then to know that there is nothing that all the wits of man can reach unto, that can benefit him: and if nothing, then not this thing in question, but that it must needs be that we must be fooles to it, and what is the true marke of a foole but to be ignorant, and without knowledge, therefore we call them fooles in the world, and so is it here; the best way for a man not to deceive himselfe, is to know nothing of this *learning*, nor any other fleshly excellencie that so he may learn true *wisdom*: and the Apostle doth (me thinks) sufficiently confirme this advice of his, against all exceptions, *the Lord knows* (saith he) *that the thoughts of men be vaine*: Men think highly of their own conceits this way, yet if no man will take this his counsell for *wisdom* in this kind, yet the Lord concludes the *truth* of it, and he knows the *thoughts* of men to be vaine, that think *Humane-Learning* some helpe: but let them think what they will, the Lord is against them in it, for he knows that it is sure that they are deceived, *for his thoughts be not as mans thoughts*.

5 Reason.

* 1 Cor. I. 17.
18.

Now another Cause that confirms me in this Conclusion, is because that wheresoever the Apostle honours the *Spirits teaching*, and preferres it, usually he at the same time casts contempt upon this *learning*, as is to be seen in many places * *Christ* (saith;

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(saith he) *sent me to preach the Gospell, not with the wisdom of words, lest I should make the crosse of Christ, or the Gospell of Christ of none effect*, where we see, that for good reason he rejects the very wisdom of words in preaching of the Gospell, and that is, lest if he should have done otherwise, he should have made it of no effect, because he was to declare the *sincere word*, without the least mingling; as if he should say, such manner of preaching is a foolish preaching, but it is *so onely to them that perish*; but to such as are saved it is the power of God, without what man expects: and therefore he * saith againe, *he was jealous over them with a godly jealousy*, for he had prepared them a pure Virgin for Christ: but saith he, *I feare that as the Serpent beguiled Eve*, but how? *through his subtilty*, so your minds should be corrupt, that is, putrified, and infected from the sincerity that is in Christ: This we see was Pauls feare, that while he was absent their minds should be withdrawn from the foolishnesse of the Gospell, and the simplicity, sincerity, and truth thereof, and this they should be withdrawn from by the subtilty of Satan that old Serpent, in his instruments the false teachers; this he feares because of their fleshynesse that was in them, which was ready to yeeld to their wiles by reason of their subtilty that way, for by faire words and flatteries they deceived the " *hearts of the simple*, and with this their craftinesse they lye in wait to ‡ deceive; thus contemptuously doth Paul speake of these things, in opposition to the true learning, as is further to be seen in many places, of which I will name one more, and that from the Apostle Peter in his second Epistle chap. 1. verse 16. *For we saith he followed not deceiverable Fables*, when we opened unto you the power and comming of our Lord Iesus. Now such names as these are, doth the Apostle choose to cast on mans excellencies, as in divers other § places which declare what contempt is cast on such learning in opposition to the Spirit of God.

Now one thing more which I conceive observable for the prooffe of this point in hand, is drawn from the 2 Cor. 2. 10. *The Spirit searches the deep things of God*, and 14. *The spirituall man discernes all things*; if then the Spirit searcheth the deep things of God, and that discernes all things, what need we more: and with this agrees the Apostle Iohn, † saying, *And ye need not that any man teach you, save as that Anoynting teacheth you*. Then I conclude, *That we need not that any man teach us, nor the Master, nor any of his followers, for the Disciples of Iesus Christ doe learne (as the truth is) in him, and of him, and they have received the Spirit of God, that they might know the things of God; therefore we may well*

* 2 Cor. 11. 2. 3

" Rom. 16. 18

‡ Ephe. 4. 14.

§ 1 Tim. 1. 4.

and 4. 7.

Tit. 3. 9.

§ Reason

† 2 Ioh. 2. 27

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well be without any mans *learning*, and have no need of it; and so the point is cleare and plain, *That such as are taught by Gods Spirit without that Learning, do truly understand the Word.*

I judge it necessary also to be understood of the Reader, what I doe understand by *human wisdom*, as well as *Human-Learning*: by *human wisdom* I doe understand whatsoever appears excellent in mans understanding, as he is left without Gods *Spirits teaching*; this the more excellent it is to him that is carnall, so much the worse it is: therefore it is said of such by the Apostle, *that whenas they professed themselves to be wise, then they became fooles.* And saith our Saviour, *If the light which is in thee (which I mind to be meant of mens understanding and wisdom) be darknesse, how great is that darknesse*: So that by mans wisdom I understand, whatsoever seems excellent to him with which he would honour God withall, that he is not the Author of, as eloquence, and faire speeches, and any thing in that way: such as the Greeks sought after, as men doe now adayes. This I do the rather differ from *Haman-Learning*, because it seems to me that the Scripture differenceth them, *Acts 22.* and the difference rightly understood may prevent just exception, and give light to the right understanding of the whole matter: for this *wisdom* is made by the Apostle, and that rightly, *to be enmity to the Spirit of God*, and impossible to submit to it, it is so contrary.

Now followes to be answered such Objections as are made against it, as first,

I Object.

That of Paul, in *1 Tim. 3. 6.* *That a Bishop must be no young Scholler, lest he being puffed up fall into the condemnation of the Devil.*

Answer.

The Scholership Paul means here, *is the teaching of the Spirit, whereby the man is made sound in the Faith*, for that learning onely will make men low in their own eyes, as is before declared, and he that is *unsound in the faith*, will ever be found the most *lofty* and puffed up in his own conceit, and so be rejected of God as the Devil was, though he was in heaven with God, yet being puffed up, he was rejected of God, and so * *cast down to hell*, to which example Paul here alludes, as I conceive, and that rightly, for a Bishop in the Church is in respect of his *spirituall state and place*, in favour and fellowship with God, and that in Heaven, as the whole Book of the Revelation describes the Church to be: Now such as by the Church should be chosen to that state, being *young Schollers*, that is, *not soundly taught in the truth by the Spirit*, he is in great danger, the more other learning that he hath, so much the more to be *puffed up*. This I beleieve was the

Rom. 1. 21.

Mat. 6. 23.

1 Cor. 1. 22.

Rom. 6. 7.

* 2 Pet. 2. 4.

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the cause of *Diotrephes* * *pride*, he wanted this Scholership, and * 3 *Iob.* 9. 10. that caused him to seek the preheminance: And this, whatsoever our great Scholers think of themselves, is the cause of the *high conceits* that they have of themselves, and their *knowledge* and *understanding* above others, that want their *learning*, even this, because they be but young Scholers (if that) in the Schole of *Christ*: and thence is it they are so puffed up with the vain glory of their *fleshly learning*, that they think that none that are not as themselves are fit to be their fellowes, and so know not now that they be *wretched, poore, miserable, blind, and naked*: though they conceive themselves to be *rich*, and have need of nothing, as did the † *Laodiceans*; and so indeed are fallen into the † *Rev.* 3. 17. condemnation of the Devil, as being rejected of God, for he resists the proud, and such as are puffed up, and gives grace to the † humble, † 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. and such as are low in their own eyes: Now whether these men *Humanly* learned, be they that are puffed up, or low in their own eyes, as meane as he that is *unlearned*, I leave to all that have eyes to see to looke into it, and so to judge whether they are not yet to learne *Pauls* Scholership.

Further I say it is here to be minded, that if it should be *Human-Learning* that is here meant, then *Paul* should teach *Timothy* for to teach the Church to chuse such Scholers, as had more learning then had their Master *Christ Iesus*: Now this some say is *blasphemy*, and threaten me sorely for it.

I Answer them, that considering *Christ Iesus* as God, according to the *Divine nature*, so he is God over all, and so gives all things, *Acts* 17. 25. and so he is the § giver of every good gift, and so *Human-Learning*, and *wisdom* are † of him, and through him: † *Iam.* 1. 17. and so much (but that men are maliciously bent) they might discern, that I in this argument had not to deale with him, as † *Rom.* 11. 37. God, but as the Minister of God, administering for the good of his body, according to that, *Luke* 4. 18. where he saith, the spirit of the Lord hath Anointed me, that I should Minister, &c. and so in this argument he is by the Apostle set forth as a Man, † *Iesus* of † *Act.* 2. 22. *Nazareth*, a man approved of God; and as such a man so administering I doe still affirme, and that with great confidence, that He was *unlearned* in this consideration, and without the learning that we speake of: and so the tongue of the " *Learned* that " *Isay.* 50. 4. was said to be given Him, is * interpreted by the same Prophet * *Isay.* 61. 1. to be the Spirit of God; for saith He, the Spirit of the Lord hath Anointed me that I should preach; from whence is plaine, that *Christ Iesus* was learned of the Father to preach by the Spirit, without

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See further of
this in the Epistle
noted with this
marke. ¶

Luk. 4. 7.

¶ Mat. 10. 5.

¶ Act. 6. 11.

¶ Act. 13. 45.

2 Object.

5 Tit. 1. 11.

Answe.

Human-Learning, and so much is plain to them that can beleve the Scriptures, from Iohn 7. 15. where the Jews admire, saying, *How comes this man to know the Scriptures, seeing that he was never learned*: from whence it is plain that as he was a Man he was unlearned in the letters of the Scriptures, though as God he knew all things, and by a divine power, not Human-Learning, so much as his own naturall tongue by letter, as in the Synagogue he could take the Book and read: and this doubtlesse was one cause, why the Jewes are said to be astonished at the bearing and seeing of Him, as appeares Math. 13. 54. &c. Luke 4. 22. so that from all this my affirmation remaines true, and good, that if Human-Learning should be it that is there meant by the Apostle, then he was to teach the Servant to be above his Master, whenas Christ Iesus himselfe * saith, *It is enough for the Disciple to be as his Lord*, and he being destitute of Human-Learning, his Disciples may well be without it also, without any offence, and yet preach the Gospel too. Now, if notwithstanding all this there be them that will take * Stephens accusers place, and still accuse me of Blasphemy as they did him, &c. though it may be, they may say true words, as that I said that Iesus Christ was without Human-Learning, and so apply it to him as God, whenas I spake of him as Man, they may there see themselves ranked among the number of them that are called by the Spirit of God false witnesses, as walking in the steps of those envious persons, even such as were alwayes the murderers and betrayers of Christ Iesus and his servants: and they that are such, may be likened to them that being full of envy, * spake against those things that were spoken of Paul, contrarying them, and rayling on them: Marke it, they denyed what he taught, but disproved it not, but spake against it, and rayled on the person, and so left not till they had bin a meane to expell them out of their Coasts; so was he, and such like measure is still to be expected to befall such as tread in his steps, but it is to be minded that envious ones are the movers of it: and so leaving of it, I come to another exception, which is,

How such as are unlearned, wilbe able to stoppe the mouthes of gainfayers, seeing the Apostle requires of a § Bishop that he should be able so to doe.

I Answer, that it is not the Apostles intent that the mouthes of gainfayers should be stopped by the knowledge of tongues and arts, but that way that himselfe directs, 1 Tim 9. which is by sound doctrine, or by wholesome doctrine: so then, to goe any other way then thus stoppe their mouthes, is both an unsound, and an unwhol-

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unwholsome course: and it were farre better in my judgement and that according to Paul, that their mouthes should be left open, then that they should be stopp after that manner, and it hath not profited them in the spirituall meaning of the word that have bin excised therein: so now it is high time that we, honouring the teaching of the Spirit, should refuse to meddle with such as goe another way to work, then by it, to declare Gods mind to us, because it alone is sufficient to stoppe the mouthes of all gainsayers. * They were not able to resist the Spirit (not the tongues and arts) by which he spake, for he used none of them, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnall, and so are tongues and arts, and such like, but yet mightie, not by man, but through God, to cast down holds: therefore this weapon onely is sufficient to stoppe the mouth of all gainsayers, and for such as think it not sufficient, much good let their Human-Learning doe them, and the good Lord give me of his holy Spirit onely, to doe this worke; and so I come to the next exception, which is,

That there was the use of tongues in the Apostles times in 3 Object. the Churches, *Act 2. Acts 8. Acts 10. Acts 19. 1 Cor. 12. and 1 Cor. 14.*

This I grant was true, but there we finde that they were the immediate gifts of God, freely given and bestowed on them as other spirituall gifts were, without their industry or paines, as appears in divers Scriptures: now whosoever such gifts are to be found, them I will freely acknowledge, as being indeed suitable to the Gospel, which brings to us freely all good gifts, without any labour or paines of ours, and therefore all is said to be of gift, least any man should boast: but if the tongues that are pleaded for, are such as are attained to by industry and paines-taking of our own, then they better suit with works then grace, and so are more meet for Egypt and Babylon then for the Church of Iesus Christ, which comes by all her pretious Gifts gratis, and therefore such as plead for these things, as suitable to the Ministers, become in effect forable with *Symon Magus*, who would have obtained the gift of the Spirit, by money, which there was the gift of tongues, and if these tongues pleaded for, be the same, they are all attained by money, and if this be so good a way now, why doth Peter so evilly intreat him, for desiring that for money, which all afterwards by these pleas were thereby to obtaine: But Peter we see perceives him to be in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity, that should offer to seeke to obtaine the gift of Gods Spirit that way: and if they be Human-excellencies,

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excellencies, then of necessity the course is to be repented of also that any should offer to bring any humane thing to Gods word when as it is so expressly forbidden us, that we put nothing thereto nor take any thing therefrom; Put nothing to his Word, least he reprove thee and thou be found a lyer. Now there is nothing but the word and spirit goe together, therefore they are lyable to Gods reproofe which is * tearing in pieces. Therefore let all such as stand for such learning to bring men to the knowledge of Gods word, mind whether Peters exhortation to Symon Magus, ought not to take place with them, namely to ‡ repent of this their wickednesse, &c. and acknowledge the Spirit of God freely bestowed, to be the alone furnisher of us to that which is right in his sight, without which none have part or fellowship of this businesse in understanding and unfolding of the things of God, and so I come to another exception.

4 Object.

Suppose two Men, both alike indued with grace from God and alike gifted by His Spirit, the one a learned man, and the other an unlearned man, which of these two should be chosen in to the Ministry of Christ in his Church?

Ans.

The unlearned man: For these Reasons.

† Gal. 2. 6

First, Because ‡ God respect no mans person: now if God should take the learned man, then he must be respected above the other for it, if he be of right and due to be preferred, which is wickednesse once to thinke of him, for all are alike in that respect but the Scripture tells us, and that for good reason, that without any respect at all, he of his good pleasure, and that no flesh should glory hath chosen the foolish things and the vile things in mans account; he

§ 1 Cor. 1. 27.

hath chosen the § foolish things of this world to confound the wise; then if, God have so chosen, let him have his own choyce, it is meet he should, for his choyce is the best; and the end why he

† Isay. 29. 13.

hath so chosen, is, that he might confound the wise, and so † fulfill

‡ 1 Cor. 1. 19.

his word, as Paul ‡ expresseth; and thus he chooseth not onely for

§ 1 Cor. 4. 10.

salvation but for ministration, the “ foolish in Mans account

2 Col. 11. 1.

Paul it seems was so foolish in theirs and others account, in his

administration of the word, as that they could scarce suffer it

and this sence must needs be good, though the place be understood of Gods choyce to salvation onely, which cannot be the mean

† 2 Cor. 11. 17

ing, because as we may see Pauls argument is about † preaching

of the Gospel, going onwards in opposing the Scribe and dispute

of this world, to them that were not such, and so comes to

declare among whom it was, that the Lord made his choyce, and

that was among the foolish in the worlds eye: but as I said

before

without HUMAN LEARNING.

before, take the other for the sense, and the point remaines true, because, that of such as God chooseth to salvation of them, he chooseth Ministers, and for salvation it is granted he chooseth the foolish, then it must needs follow, that out of the foolish also he chooseth Ministers.

Secondly, And this indeed is most suitable to the Gospel, * which is it selfe simplicity, and appeares to the wisdom of man * 2 Cor. 11.3. so to be, and it is not meet our Saviour saith to put contraries together, as a new piece into an old garment, nor new wine into old vessels, but to have all things suitable. Therefore seeing the Gospel is \ddagger foolishnesse, therefore it is meet he should have foolish Ministers in the wise worlds account, yea and in his servants too, whenas they see as man sees, and not as doth the Lord, For thus was it of old subject to Samuel the Lords Prophet, whenas the Lord sent him to the house of Ishay, to anoynt him a King, he seeing as a man doth, he said, \ddagger surely the Lords anoynted is before me, but we find that the Lord corrects that, and tells him, it was not so, the more unlikely man, and the unthought of one, was he that God had chosen to himselfe, and so is it here, we are not to see as man sees, but as the Lord directs us. \ddagger 1 Sam. 16. 6.7.

Thirdly, God chooseth these things in opposition to others, to astonish the wisdom of man: When the \S Councel perceived Peter and John were unlearned men, and without knowledge, they marvelled, and were amazed: And so saith the Apostle, He \dagger catcheth the wise in their own craft: they thinke that all knowledge lyes in their breasts. Now the Lord he comes and makes fooles wise, and so catcheth them, manifesting that their thoughts be but vaine, in thinking that the wise be them that God hath chosen; for it is not so, for he hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise, and therefore such as are godly wise, should choose Gods wise, but the worlds foolish things for His, serve before the worlds wise ones: and so I come to another exception, which is, \S Act. 4.13. \dagger 1 Cor. 3.19.

If it be sanctified, it must needs be a good helpe to the right understanding of the Truth. 5 Object.

It is true, if it be sanctified, so it is, But how or where doth that appeare that ever it was sanctified? Hath not the Lord long agoe told us by his * Prophet, and wished his to behold it, that he would doe a marvellous worke, and then he doubles it againe, even a marvellous worke and a wonder, and then all comes to this, that he would cause to perish, and destroy the wisdom of the wise, and cast away the understanding of the prudent; and here if we could see, we might all of us stay our wondering at this strange thing, and

Answer.

* Isay. 19.15.

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and consider, the Lord tells us, *it is a marvellous worke and a wonder*, and so our wondering and marveyling, how these things come so to be, is but a fulfilling of Gods word; and men might rest in it, and see in the next words, *that it is a wo to them for the former abuse of the same*: and so now as * Malachy saith, *that he would curse their blessings, and that he had done it already*: to both which ‡ agrees the Apostle from *Isay*, and concludes also *that God hath destroyed it*: and in another place tells us, *that it is enmity with God*. How shall any dare say then, *it is sanctified*, whenas so plain a curse is on it, as that we are wished to beware of being ‡ *spoyle*d by it: Now are we wished any where to beware of being spoyled by that which is *sanctified to us*, in a *spirituall way*. Now these things can be *sanctified* no further then they are of use, and that is but in a worldly way: for a *spirituall use* they be accursed from it.

* Mal. 2. 2.

‡ I Cor. 1. 19.

Rom. 8. 7.

‡ Col. 2. 8.

6 Objec.

Now another exception from these things thus minded is, That by this all *Humane-Learning* seems utterly to be condemned.

Ans.

I Answer, that it followes not, because it is not to be allowed in this way, that therefore it is not of any use; for I doe acknowledge it in it selfe to be a good thing, and good in its proper place, which is for the repaying of that *decay which came upon man for sinne*: so, I say, it is of good use, for the repaying of that losse, and so fit for States-men, Physicians, Lawyers, and Gentlemen, yea, all men so farre as they can attaine to it, are as men beyond and above others that are without it, yea, and beyond all other excellencies that this world can afford: but bring it once to be a *help to understand the mind of God in the holy Scriptures*, and there it is *detestable filth, drosse and dung* in that respect, and so good for nothing, but ‡ *destroy and cause men to erre*, as we have seen before: It fares with it, as I perceive, as it doth with Fire, keep it in the Chymney, and it serves as a good *blessing of God*, for good and necessary uses, but let it once come into the roote of the house, and it destroyes all, because it is not in its proper place: so it is here for this thing, among men, for *humane and worldly employments*, it is good; But bring it once to the *persfing of the Gospel*, and it will be found to be the spoiling of it.

† I Tim. 6. 21.

And yet further so farre doe I acknowledge *tongues* to be of use, as to yeeld us the *translation*, of the *Scriptures*, out of one language into another, without which we that are *unlearned* could not come to have the *letter of the word*, and so farre there is

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as a necessity of it for that use : but that man which can soe doe, is ever the more able to understand the spirituall meaning of the word thereby, that I deny, and withall doe affirme that an understanding man may through the teaching of the Spirit know the mind of God, which the other may never reach unto, according to that * saying of our Saviour ; To you it is given to know the Mysteries, the secrets of the Kingdome of heaven, to you his simple Disciples it is given, but to others, the learned Scribes and Pharisees it was not given : But in this case it may fare as it did with those that built Noahs Arke, they made a place of safeguard for others, but were drowned themselves : so these men may prepare a good helpe for others, but themselves be altogether without the benefit of it : A Lanterne you know is of good use, to contain the Candle, but let one carry it in a darke night, and it will doe him no pleasure without a Candle lighted in it ; of the same use is the letter of the word, it is but as a Lanterne or Candle without light. Now the Spirit is the light of the letter, and so is the Apostles * opposition : such men then in that respect may be a helpe to others, and yet when all is done be but castawayes themselves, seeing as we have before seen, the Egyptians and Babylonians in this kind of learning did excell. And it is none other blessing then what the Pope, Cardinalls, and other professed enemies of the truth (as all for the generall confesse them to be) have in as great a measure, and beyond many others that professe to know the truth, and stand stiffly for this as a speciall helpe to understand the true meaning of the Lord in the word, which if it be so, then by their own grants they have the advantage of them, and so are to be revered of themselves, to have more knowledge in it then they : so then, they are to acknowledge their error, in counting themselves wise above what is meet, or else must be forced to confesse, that that learning is inwayleable for finding out of the mind of God. Neither for all this would I have any to conclude of me, as some affirme, that I hold all Learned men to be excluded from the spirituall meaning of the Word, God forbid, for,

Though the Apostle * say, not many of severall rankes, yet he saith not, there is none, but yet not many : There was one Ioseph of Arimathea ; One † Nicodemus ; One Deputy * Surgeon Paulus a prudent man, and divers of * the Priests. But this was not usuall, for it is hard for such men to entertaine the truth. Gods ordinary way is among the foolish * weake and vile ; so that when as the wise, rich, noble and learned come to receive the Gospel,

* Mat. 13. 11.

* 2 Cor. 3.

* 1 Cor. 1. 26.

* Mar. 15. 43.

* Ioh. 3. 1.

Aff. 13. 7.

* Aff. 6. 7.

* 1 Cor. 1. 27.

28.

Iam. 2. 5. with

they Mat. 11. 5.

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- * Rom. 12. 26. * lower sort, the foolish, vile and unlearned, for those be the true
 ‡ I say 51. 1. ‡ keyes of it; and therefore it was not in vaine, that Iames sayd,
 ‡ Iam. 2. 5. ‡ Hearken, my beloved Brethren, hath not God chosen the poore, he
 well saw that the rich and carnall were dull of hearing of this
 matter, but yet he tells them God hath chosen the poore of this world
 to be rich in Faith, and upon this consideration it is that he wish-
 ‡ I am. 1. 9. eth the \$ Brother of high degree to rejoyce in that he was made low,
 that is, brought in his mind, and account equall with the poore, account-
 ing himselfe never the higher for any such excellencies: and so the
 Brother of low degree, to rejoyce in that he is exalted, that is, that he
 ‡ Rev. 1. 6. was made a King and Priest unto God, and was set in heavenly places
 with Iesus Christ; so as the one is made low in respect of any
 fleshly confidence he hath in such things, the other is exalted, be-
 ing outwardly poore, by being in Christ Iesus, and so they both
 meet in one; but now by reason of the smoke that is risen out of the
 ‡ Ephes. 2. 6. bottomlesse pit, and that the Devil is * cast out of heaven, and all his
 Angels with him to the Earth, which Angels were the fallen
 ‡ Rev. 12. 9. ‡ Starres that he drew after his tayle, that now he hath by reason of
 them hatched since a Religion in the world, as that he would
 have the wise, the rich, the noble, the learned the onely ones, and
 the poore must be beholden to them, whenas this is like him-
 selfe directly to oppose Iesus Christ; so, as that we may truly say
 with the Prophet, Lord who hath beleevved our report, or to whom is
 the arme of the Lord revealed.

7 Objeⁿ.

But it is yet further Objected to be the manner of such as
 cannot themselves attaine to that excellencie that is in another, to
 disparage that in them that so they might advance them-
 selves.

Ans^r.

This I confesse is a carnall course that such as are themselves
 fleshly are subject to take, and it may as well be my fault as
 anothers, But yet I professe in the presence of the Lord that I
 doe not allow my selfe in any such course. Neither doth such
 an exception as this besee me a man that is led by the Spirit of Truth,
 for to make against any servant of God, that professeth opposition
 to such things, as professing to be led thereto by the word and
 Spirit of Truth, For it savours strongly of the flesh, and is too
 futable to the practise of Reprobates, whose practise is to take
 things in the evil part, whereas love by which all the Saints should
 judge, judges the best of things, till such time it can espie any
 cause so to doe. And for the lifting up of my selfe, to be sure if
 I so doe, Gods word it is, that he will plucke the mighty from his seat,
 and

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and then you may be sure that according to his word my fall will be farre greater then my exaltation can possibly be, and therefore it were best for all such as so conceive, to commit the judgement to the Lord, and themselves judge nothing before the time, nor speake no more presumptuously: let not arrogancie come out of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him enterprises are established. But yet after this manner of reasoning, carnall men may overthrow the whole Gospell: For whereas the Scripture shews that Iesus Christ was without forme, or beauty, or any such thing, wherfore he should be desired, the carnall man will soon say no other but such a one would be so foolish, as to part from honours, riches, credit, and such like, to indure so much sorrow and need not; and whereas the Apostle * saith, that he tooke on him the forme of a servant, they would soon answer, and good reason why, because he could not be a Master: and wheras it is said, he chose the poore, that will they say, he must needs do; and the foolish, for none of the rich and wise, would be so simple, as to follow him: and wheras he saith, love not the world, nor the things in it, good cause why will they say, for such fooles as you, know not how to get it, or else, to be sure, you would love it as well as others. And thus have I given you a glympse, how that by this manner of carnall arguing, we might overthrow our own salvation, and sit down in the very vale and shadow of death, as full of darknesse, as this argument is destitute of Truth.

And thus having Answered to such exceptions as I know of made against this truth: I come now to such Uses as it shall afford us. The first is

To discover to us the depth of the great Woe, that the world lyes under, set forth and "revealed to us, in which the word of the Lord is fulfilled, and men see it not: and this you know the Scripture in sundry places makes the depth of a judgement, as in Hosea, Ephraim is said to have here and there gray hayres, and yet he saw them not; and in this we know was the strength of that great Judgement, that men shou'd confidently take lyes for truth, this is there made the depth of their woe. And the like is manifested else where, by the same Apostle, declaring, that though they speake lyes, yet they were so feared in their Consciences, as that they felt, nor feared no danger that they were in, no more then the man that lying drunke did, though he lay sleeping on the top of the Mast, and so ready to be drowned, yet he feared it not; and yet such is the case, the Sun and the Ayre being darkened, their condition must needs be wofull: and yet this is the case of the inhabitants of the

* Phil. 2.

I Jsc.

" Rev. 9. from
1. to 11.

† 2 The. 2. 11.

1 Tim. 4 2.

Pro. 23. 35. 35.

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Earth, that they cannot be brought to beleeve, but that they are in a very good case, though *that the light of the glorious Gospel, which is the Image of God, doe not shine unto them*, as * saith the Apostle. Now that by which this Sun is said to be darkened, is the smoke of the bottomlesse pit, and that we shall find to be the glory and power of the false Church, called by the name of the Bottomlesse pit. And that this may the better appeare, we find many "places in the Scripture, manifesting the glory of God, and his power to be his smoke: Now because God hath smoke in his Temple, so hath Gods adversary in his Temple also, or rather, his bottomlesse pit: After his smoke, in Revel. 9. 2. 3. there follows power; and if you looke in the 7, 8, and 9. verses, there is their glory; and it doth further appeare by the 13th Chap. and the 3. verse. that it was so great power and glory, as that all the world wondered, and admired it; and yet this Iesus Christ accounts a great wo and plague to them; Now part of this wo, I beleeve is this learning, which we have here in question, for as we have before manifested, the Sun light of the Gospel of Iesus Christ allows not, for the glory of Christs Doctrine is, that it is of the Spirits teaching: for when we behold the glory of the Lord in the most perfectest measure, so as we are changed thereinto from glory to glory, yet all is from the Spirit of the Lord, seeing that he is the promised Comforter, that is to teach us all good things belonging to our perfection. Then it must needs follow that is a smokey power, and glory, flowing from the Kingdome of Sathan, and so a part of the taylor that the 6 Dragon drew the Starres withall after him: and hence comes it to passe, that now instead of the Spirits teaching, according to Peters prophesie, here are a generation that doe arise, which privily bring in damnable errours, and so for that end forsaking the Spirit of truth. they speake lyes through hypocrisie, as Paul also witnesseth they should doe, pretending now that the true and right way for understanding the Scriptures and mind of God was, that men for that end must learne a part from others, onely for that worke, and so to be taught in Tongues, and divers Languages, and have their wits exercised in Arts and Sciences humane: and so such a flourish beares this in mans conceit, as that it seems the onely way that can be for a man to be made fit for this worke: so that before while the Angels kept their station in heaven, the Spirits simple teaching was judged sufficient without these things for this worke, they now being fallen from thence to the earth, and having the key of the bottomlesse pit, thence it being opened, now ariseth up * Plato and Aristotle, and a multitude more of Heathen Philosophers. These are the soure Angels

2 Cor. 4. 4. 6.

" Isay. 6. 4.

1 King. 8. 11.

12. with 15.

Rev. 8

Rev 16. 10. 11

2 Cor. 3. 12.

6 Rev. 12. 4.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

1 Tim. 4. 2.

Rev. 9. 2.

* See Iohn Bale
on Rev. 9. 1.

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gels that stand on the foure corners of the earth, holding the foure winds that they should not blow on the Earth, neither on the Sea, neither on any Tree, as being those that have the whole power of Preach- Rev. 7. 1. ing in their hand, not suffering any to blow but who they please, and so doe withhold the truth in unrighteousnesse, declaring thereby they Rem. 1. 18. be under the wrath of God: and they seem to yeeld these Stairey Principles, very fitting in their own understanding, better to furnish them with finesse to open the mind of God, then His Spirit can doe; whereas before, whenas the perfect teachings of the holy Spirit was in force, these men of all others were by reason of their learning and wisdom, the most untutabest men that were in the world for the receiving of the truth, as appears by the testimony of Luke, and is not yet for all the great Sun light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which these men professe, they have these blacke smokey principle: still so stiffly stood for, as that there is no removing of men from the high conceit that they have of them. And doth not this sufficiently declare as the Apostle saith, that God hath blinded the minds of men, so as they cannot see, but are so much 2 Cor. 4. 4. the blinder because they say they see: and hence came it to passe, Ioh. 9. 41. that I for mentioning Plato and Aristotle, and such like, was demanded how I came by the knowledge of that, if not by Human-Learning? with contempt cast upon it, as if that which I had from them, being Humane Learned Men, was of it selfe sufficient to overthrow the matter which I had there delivered.

I answered then as I doe still, it was none other but as Paul mentioned to the Athenians their own Poets, and yet for all that he was as great an enemy to Human-Learning as I, and greater too. And it is to be minded, as I have before declared, that I doe not oppose the knowledge of Humane things, nor yet deny but that we may be acquainted with their sayings, as the Apostle himselfe, and our Saviour was, yea and that sometimes we make use of them too, as occasion requi res, as I have done here, though sparingly, and but seldome, and when it is, that it be of great use, as it was at those 3 times that Paul did use them, and no more, that I remember in all the Scripture. Now this you see the Spirit teacheth, and therefore it cannot properly be called Human-Learning, especially in my sence that I have to doe withall, which is to oppose that which is maintained, to make men fitting to open the mind of God in his word, which is by the learning of tongues and arts, as of necessity, wheras this is used but by the by, and not to find out the Truth with, but it being sufficiently before proved, by them-

AE. 1. 18.

2 Cor. 4. 4.
Ioh. 9. 41.

Objec.

Answ.

AE. 17.

AE. 17. 28.

1 Cor. 15. 33.

Tit. 1. 12.

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Rev. 12. 16.

1 Tim. 6. to. 12.

Rev. 12. 4.

* 2 Tim. 2. 24.

25.

themselves also. It is the *Spirits* order to gaine there *acknowledgement* of it, and this is no other *learning*, but what every man without any *Scholarship* (as ye call it) may attaine unto, whereas that that is so much *gloried in*, is, that a man is able aptly to *speake* according to art and knowledge in the *Sciences*, and this is it by which men yet still are *hatched* and bred up, and this I beleieve was the meanes of bringing in all those *abominable errors* that the *Earth* hath drunken, both in *Doctrine* and *Practise*, and so have occasioned those *noysome lusts* that drown men in *perdition*, that the man of God is to *flie*, as best becomming the *tayle* of the *Dragon*, and *luting* with this great *woe* which is further manifested, by comparing the *Ministers of Iesus Christ* and those together. Now what marks they be known by, you may read in 2 *Cor. 6.* from the the 3. to the 11. verse, where as in a *Looking-glasse*, you may behold the *true picture*, both of the one, and of the other: By them we approve our selves as the *Ministers of Christ*, and give none occasion, why our *Ministry* should be reprooved, saith *Paul*, In much *Patience*, in *Afflictions*, in *Necessities* in *Distresses*, in *strips*, in *Imprisonments*, in *Tumults*, in *Labour*, in *Watchings*, in *Fastings*, by *purenes*, by *knowledge*, by *long-suffering*, by *kindnesse*, by the *Holy Ghost*, by *love* unfeigned, by the word of *truth*, by the power of *God*, by the *armour* of *righteousnesse*, on the right hand, and on the left, by *honour* and *dishonour*, by *evill report*, and *good report*, as *deceivers* and yet *true*; as *unknown*, and yet *known*, as *dying*, and yet behold we *live*, as *chastened*, and not *killed*, as *sorrowfull*, and yet alway *rejoycing*, as *poore*, and yet *making many rich*, as *having nothing* and yet *possessing all things*. These ye see are the marks by which *Paul* approves himselfe with his fellow *labourers*, to be the *Ministers of Christ*. Now the quite *contrary* may be read in those that professe themselves so to be: They disprove themselves to be the *Ministers of Christ*, in all these things; where is their *patient bearing* with the *contrary minded*, as *Paul* saith the * *servants of God* should doe? and where are their *afflictions* which they *suffer*, with their *necessities* and *distresses*? are they not for the most part full of all *outward necessities*? What are they in *distresse* for? How many *stripes* do they *suffer*, or shall have need so to doe, be they but *observant* of their *Canonicall obedience*? How many, nay, where are any *imprisonments* that they *suffer*, or at least need to doe, if they live according to their own *Laws*? And for *tumults*, they are so farre from abiding any, as that they be farre more ready to make them against others, then to indure them themselves: and for their *labours*, which what he means you may perceive by 1 *Cor. 4. 12.* and

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and that to be sure they are guiltlesse of: and so for their watchings and fastings, and all the rest being duly considered of, we may read the quite contrary fulfill'd in them, so that of necessity there will appeare as voyd a difference, as is betwixt light and darknesse, and those persons more fitly suting that description, belonging to the * Locusts, then with this description here of the * Apostle, so farre are they from what they pretend themselves to be, as that the words of the Prophet come truly to be fulfill'd in them, that their * wisdom and their knowledge perverts them, or causes them to erre, and is the wickednesse they trust unto: and this is it that lifts them up in their own conceits, so farre, as that they think in their hearts, and stick not to say also with their tongues, that they are for the ministracion of the word, and none else: and the Lord saith, that their wisdom and knowledge is the cause of this their error, and they say, it is the meanes of right understanding: now whether is to be beleev'd, God or they, let all judge, especially when as we see, that the Lord himselfe is against them for it, in denying others he denyes them, saying, therefore shall evill come upon thee, and thou shalt not know where it ariseth, &c. all which declares the depth of the woe they lye under; for is not this a wofull thing, that of that which God hath made a curse, men should make a blessing, and that against his will, and say that his mind cannot be known, what can be more against him.

In the next place, that being so, that men taught by Gods spirit are through it sufficiently made able to know his mind in word, then it teacheth us not to account any man any whit the nearer to understand the Scriptures by any humane excellencies, but rather let us be suspicious of him that hath them, for the same: especially if he make use of them in those things, for as we have seen they be dangerous to be leaned unto. It is his high time that now we should all awake from sleep, and watch in the Spirit, and so let the Lord have all the prayse and glory of his own grace: Not unto us, Not into us, but to his name be all the glory, seeing it is he onely that doth great things. 2 Vse.

Also it may teach all men to cease pinning of their faith upon the sleeves of learned men, for there is no good cause why we should so doe, but to see with our own eyes, seeing that the just is to live by his own Faith, and to beleieve what the Lord hath said, which is, that he hath * hid those things, that is, the mysteries of the Gossell (among which, this which now is declared is one) from the wise and learned, and this I verily beleieve, is the wholsome doctrine of the Gossell, and which hath against it the wise and learned * Luk. 10.28

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ned opposing and denying of it to be so, and so confirming the words of our Saviour: therefore need we not to wait for their witness to it, but to be glad, and rejoyce to see his saying made true, That he will reveale them to Babes, that is, simple things in the worlds eye and account, and with this consideration to overlooke all contempt that can be cast upon us for the same: For so is it now with men, that they judge that nothing is hid from such and such,

¶ Zach. 13. 2.

* Zachary, that the Lord will cut off the names of the Idols and the unclean spirits of the Land, and that while they Prophecise their Father and Mother that begat them, shall run them through with the sword of the Spirit, and say, that they shall not live, because they tolde lyes in the name of the Lord, and then shall they be ashamed of their vision; and it then shall be known, that their garments, by which they be known and taken knowledge of to be Ministers are garments of deceit: and at that day such Prophets, shall be ashamed of themselves, as that they shall disclaime themselves for very shame, to stand in any relation to such Prophets, as ¶ the Prophet shews, whenas their nearest friends with contempt shall refuse them, and run them through, saying, thou toldest us lyes in the name of the Lord; such light it seems shall then appeare, as that they themselves shall count him no Prophet, that is so made by mans teaching: Now this teaching in question, is but mans teaching, and therefore whenas the cleare light appeares they shalbe ashamed of it, though now they preferre it.

3 Use.

¶ Mat. 11. 29.

This Consideration also ministers matter of thankfulness to God on our parts, for his exceeding kindnesse towards us in Christ Iesus, for that he is pleased to reveale these great Mysteries to such meane and simple things as we are, whenas he conceales them from the wise and prudent: This use ¶ Christ Iesus himselfe makes and gives us to understand the true cause wherefore, and that he makes not any excellencie in them, more then was in others, but onely according to the nature of the Gospell, the good pleasure of God, which is indeed the onely ground of all our happinesse and blessed must needs all those be, that can with our Saviour truly conclude with the same. And so I come to the next point; for having found out who be the Learned-men that Peter here intends, which is, they that are taught by the Spirit of God then it must needs follow, that they that are not such, are the perverters of these and all other Scriptures to their own destruction and so this is another observation,

That such as are destitute of the Spirits teaching, though furnished with

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with Human-Learning are the perverters and wresters of these and all other Scriptures to their own destruction.

The truth of this Conclusion appears plainly confirmed to us in the * Pharisees, as our Saviour declares in many particulars plainly discovering the "blindnesse of these learned teachers," in esteeming and preferring of things lesse in themselves, above such as were farre greater, as the proportion is made betwixt the gold of the Temple, and the Temple, and the Altar and that which was offered thereon: and so blind were they that they counted that most holy, which the Temple and the Altar made to be holy, and the same * elsewhere appears, that for all their learning, they taught directly against the mind of God in his word. We may see the same further commended to us in Barjesus one full of all * subtilty in this kind, but a turner from the Faith, and not to it, and a perverter of the straight wayes of God. The like is to be observed in * those of whom Paul speaks, that would be Doctors of the Law, and yet knew not what they said, nor whereof they affirmed, so wise their Humane-Learning did helpe to make them.

Now from the word of God good Reasons may be observed, further to confirme this, as first,

Because nothing but the Spirit of God can bring any to the true knowledge of the word of God, and so saith the * Apostle, We have received the Spirit of God, that we may know the things that are given us of God; and Peter * tells us, that no Scripture is of any private interpretation, but in opposition to that, the Apostle sets the Spirit, and opposes it to the will of Man, and so declares that the Spirits interpretation, where it is, is a publique interpretation and not private; and that Men, though indued with great learning, having not the Spirit of God can give but a private interpretation according to the Apostles intent: let men judge what they will though it be the Pope, and all his Councels of Cardinals and Bishops, and the rest of that learned rabble, yet they being destitute of the Spirit, can give but a private interpretation according to the Apostles mind: whereas if a Man have the Spirit of God, though he be a Pedler, Tinker, Chimney-sweeper, or COBLER, he may by the helpe of Gods Spirit, give a more publique interpretation, then they all, for as * Paul saith of love, the same is to be said of the Spirit, though men did speake with the tongues of Men and Angels, and knew all secrets, and had all knowledge, yet this is but as a sounding brasse, or tinkling Cymball without the Spirit.

Another Reason is, because this was one end of Iesus Christ His

* Math. 23.

from 16. to 19.

* Math. 15. from 3. to 7.

* Acts 13. 6.

* 1 Tim. 1. 7.

Reas. 1.

* 1 Cor. 2. 12.

* 2 Pet. 1. 20.

21.

* 1 Cor. 13. 1.

Reas. 2.

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- * *Ioh. 9. 39.* His coming into the world, *that they that * see might be made blind*, and this clearely appears in the Pharisees, those *learned wise men* that counted the common people as *accursed*, because not knowing the Law, and they themselves *seeing, blessed ones*: and therefore "say they, *Do any of the Rulers, or Pharises beleeeve in him*, as touching, that the Rulers and Pharises must needs know the Truth, whenas these were *blind guides*, as saith our Saviour, and so much † these took notice of that he so accounted them; and so also those that were *blind in mans sight*, as was the *blind man* there spoken of, *He sees the gift of God, and beleeeves in Iesus Christ for his salvation*, and yet they refuse the knowledge and light of this *seeing § man*, and upbraid him for being born in *sins* and for going about to *teach them*, scorning that such *learned men* as they should be taught of such as he was, though *Iesus Christ* hath made him *learned*, and given himselfe for him.
- § *ver. 29.*
- 3 Reason. Another Reason is rendered out of the words, Because such are *unlearned and unstable ones*: for as before we have seen such persons are *destitute of the true learning*, so also are they in an *unsettled and unstable condition*, seeing as the Prophet † witnesseth *that the Spirit is the establisher*; neither can they be rooted, and *established in the Faith*, according to the Apostles * saying, seeing they be not founded on the rock *Christ Iesus*, but on the *sands of Hum-m-Learning*, arising from a *fleshly mind*, destitute of the *Spirit of Truth*, for they have not *learned, as the Truth is in Iesus*:
- † *Psalms 51.*
- * *Col. 2. 7.*
- 4 Reason. Again, it must needs be so that such must *pervert the Scriptures* because it is impossible for them to goe beyond their *principle*. Now their *principle is errour*, as the following words declare, and by it they be guided, and lead, even the whole heape of them, as bigge as it is, *and these shall satisfy mens lusts, and turne them from the Faith, unto Fables*, as the " Apostle long agoe hath foretold: For such as are themselves of the *flesh*, turn all things to *fleshlinesse*, for that is it which they savour, for to the *uncleane all things are uncleane*, their *Consciences being defiled*, as † witnesseth the Apostle: hence was it that whenas our Saviour § bade the Jewes to *destroy this Temple* meaning his † body, they themselves being *carnall*, understood him to speake of the Temple of *Ierusalem*. And so the *Capernaïtes*, whenas *Iesus Christ* tells them, *He will give * them of His flesh to eate*, they being *carnall* cannot beare it, and all because they be *destitute of the Spirit*, for it was in a *spirituall sense* that he intended it: And the like is to be seen in *Nicodemus a Pharisee*, and so a *learned man*,
- † *Tit. 1. 15.*
- § *Ioh. 1. 29.*
- † *ver. 29.*
- *Ioh. 6.*
- vers. 53. 60. 63.*
- Ioh. 3. 1. 3. 4.*

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man, being a Teacher, and a Ruler of the Jewes, this man for all this whenas Iesus Christ tells him that he must be borne againe, otherwise he cannot enter into the Kingdome of God, he seeing no further then into the naturall birth, demands how that could be, that a man when he is old should enter into his Mothers wombe, and be borne againe, so destitute was he of the spirituall meaning of the mind of Iesus Christ in his word.

Another Reason (me thinks) included in the words is,

Because such Persons are usually vessels of wrath, prepared to destruction, therefore they drive all to the same end, to which themselves belong: the Gospell is the savour of life to life in them that are saved, but it is the savour of death to them that perish: Yet would I not from hence have any to conclude, that I deny salvation to learned men, as some in effect have affirmed (as I heare) of me, for the Scripture is against it, as is already before declared from the * Apostle, though there be not many. But yet this for certaine is the worst worke that a carnall man can undertake, to meddle with the Scriptures, seeing that he abuseth them, and that to his own destruction: for the word is a Sword with two edges, which whosoever that is carnall meddles with, it will run into his heart, to ‡ harden it against the day of wrath. And so I conceive the point is cleare, and plain, That men without Gods Spirit, though furnished with Human-Learning, doe wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.

But here it will then be demanded, how shal we know whether we have the Spirit of God, or the spirit of Error?

I Answer, that the Spirit of God is a sufficient witness to it selfe, seeing that the Spirit is Truth. Now this agreeing as it doth with the word, needs not any other testimony of it selfe, because it is the witness of God, and that is the greatest, as saith Iohn, the ‡ Spirit beareth witness, for the Spirit is Truth: and againe, ‡ hereby we know that he abideth in us, even by the Spirit that he hath given us.

Next, it is to be known by its operations and works: as first it savours spirituall things, they that are after the flesh, saith the Apostle, † savour the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. And againe, the " Spirit is life for righteousness sake, and is said to be of a § quickning and an enlivening nature for righteousness. The fruits of it are further manifested in ‡ other places. Now these things being found in us, do witness for God against error, though it set it selfe up with never so high a hand. And yet here (methinks) I heare the worldly

§ Reason

* 1 Cor. 1. 26.

‡ Rom. 2. 5.

1 Object.

Answer.

‡ 1 Ioh. 5. 6.

‡ 1 Ioh. 3. 24.

† Rom. 8. 5.

vers. 10.

§ vers. 11.

‡ Gal. 5. 22. 23

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Object. 2.

** 1 King. 22.*

24.

Answer.

** vers. 6.*

† Rev. 15. 1.

Object. 3.

Answer.

§ 2 Tim. 3. 16.

† 1 Cor. 1. 17.

** 1 Cor. 2. 1.*

" vers. 4.

† vers. 5.

learned men saying to me as did * *Zedekiah*, when went the Spirit of God from them to such as I speake of? To this I Answer, That with *Zedekiah* such persons doe but begge the question, and take for granted like him, that which they never had, for that could never depart from him which was never with him: therefore though he were great, and his companions many, as is shewed, and that *Micajah* was but one poore Prophet alone, and hated of the King, yet he had the Spirit of God, whereas all the other were led and ruled by the lying Spirit; and though *Iesus Christ*, and his learned ones cannot be beleaved of the great, and honourable Prophets of the world, but by *Zedekiah*: shall be smitten on the Cheek, when by them this question is demanded of the Lords Prophets, yet this answer may be given them, that whereas they come to hide themselves in secret, and to be ashamed of their vision, and that the † seven last plagues come to be fulfilled, spoken of in the Revelations; then they shall find the truth of the testimony that is borne against them, though in the meane time the servants of the Lord be committed to prison, there to eat the bread of affliction, and the water of affliction for their testimony.

But though it be granted that *Human Learning* is no helpe to understand the mind of God, yet is it not usefull to furnish us with words to expresse our selves in the delivery of the Gospel?

I Answer with *Paul*, that the whole Scripture is given of God, and is profitable to make the man of God absolute and thoroughly § furnished to every good worke, whence I conclude, that if the Scripture be perfect, and absolute for every good worke, then it is so for that, so that then there is no need of mans wisdom to helpe the Ministers of God. And so yet further saith the Apostle, that he † preached the Gospel, not with wisdom of words, if not with wisdom of words, then I conclude, they were needlesse, and so much the next words declare, least saith he, I should make the Crosse of none effect. And againe, I, Bretheren, saith he when I came unto you, came not with the * excellencie of words, or of wisdoms, shewing unto you the Councel of God, but frees himselfe from it, denying that his preaching stood in the " enticing speech of mans wisdom, but on the contrary, in the plaine evidence and demonstration of the Spirit. And afterwards he gives the † Reason for it, that their Faith should not be in the wisdom of men, by which it seems it is subject so to be, if that were used. And so we find that indeed it is, and not in the power of God, by the plaine demonstration of the Spirit: and though in all this one would think the Apostle had said

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said enough in this matter for the manner of the delivering of the truth, yet for all this he hath not done with it, but minds it yet * againe, saying, *Which things as we know them, so we also speak* * 1 Cor. 2. 13. *not with words, which mans wisdom teacheth.* And so againe, he ‡ slightly passeth over the words of the false teachers, as not ‡ Cor. 4. 19. worth the knowing or regarding: therfore he saith, *when he comes he will know, not their words, but their power.* And so againe, he condemns to the false teachers, so farre, as to confesse that he was "rude in speaking, but not so in knowledge: by all which" Cor. 11. 6. places it plainly appeares, that mans wisdom is to be rejected, even in speaking the word of God, and that none are to affect any excellencie that way, but to content themselves even with the use of the naturall abilities they have, without any art or skill in learning further.

But Apollas is said to be an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, Acts 18. 24. Object. 4.

And so doubtles was Paul, and Moses and those mentioned in Acts 19. and yet, as I have before manifested, that whenas all these came to receive the faith they left, forooke, and contemned all that: so do I beleve was it here with this man, that whenas he came to be taught further in the knowledge of Christ, that he then became more and more futable to the rudenesse and simplicity of preaching the Gospell, aswell as Paul, for never afterwards do we reade that he was commended by that term, for such manner of excellencie was proper to the Law, and not to the Gospell in any degree. But Secondly, take it for granted that he persisted in his eloquence, yet it appeares that it was such as he had obtained by being mighty in the Scriptures: and this also further justifies a former Answer, that the Scripture alone is sufficient to furnish us with expression. So now the point remaining true for all this, That men destitute of the Spirit, have man-Learning, doe pervert the Scriptures to their own destruction. This in the first place may teach

All men, that are without Gods Spirit, how wise and learned otherwise they seem to be, to beware of meddling with the Scriptures, it is the worst work that possibly they can undertake, for in so doing they meddle with that, in which they have no skill, and so wound themselves: for it is a sharpe two edged sword, and they having no skill to handle it, to be sure it will dangerously wound them to their own destruction: but seeing the truth is so, as that they have neither eares to heare, nor hearts to understand it, therfore I will thus passe it over: and

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2 Vse.

* 1 Cor. 14. 24

* 1am 1. 6. 7. 8.

In the next place, take notice that such persons without Gods Spirit, wha ever they be else, yet they be both *unlearned* and *unstable men*, according to the *mind of God*: so the * *unbeliever* is called of Paul, an *unlearned man*: and so much in effect * James tells us, of a Faithlesse mans *inconstancie*, that he is *tost about like a wave*, and is *unstable in all his wayes* of Religion, for indeed wanting the Spirit to *establish him*, he is driven hither and thither of every blast and breath of *mans wisdom*, and so much experience, without any more *Scriptures* dayly proves, upon every change of *orders*, and *ordinances of Religion*: how confident have many *wise worldly Learned men* bin of their *stability* for being brought to yeeld to this or that, when as the raging wave of the Sea hath roared but a *little*, how have these men fallen from their supposed *stability* and *stedfastnes*: so that instances I need not name, every ones small experience can bring forth enough: but from all this there is given us to see the *Scriptures* fullfilled before our eyes, for our *confirmation*, and their just *conviction*.

3 Vse.

* Mat. 18. 20.

* Lev. 26. 11.

12.

2 Cor. 6. 16.

Pf 132. 13. 14.

Rev. 13. 1.

Rev 2. 1.

§ 2 Cor. 6. 16.

with Heb. 3. 6.

with 1 Pet. 2. 5.

Now in the next place, I will manifest in some few particulars, how these *learned men*, but according to *Peters intent*, *unlearned men*, do pervert the *Scriptures*, making their *interpretations* as *carnall* as themselves, for whenas the *Scriptures* speake of *learning*, and so by it do for the most part commend unto us the *learning of the Spirit of Truth*, as before we have seen from this *text*, and many more places, these persons presently apply them to *Human-Learning*, and the *texts* are all by them wrested and perverted: and in this kind many Instances might further be alledged. First concerning the Church: whereas the *Scriptures* doe authorize Christians to *gather themselves together in Christs name*, and so have the * *promise of Gods presnce* in so doing. This they presently deny to be the *intent* of the place, and say it is to be meant of two or three come together in performance of *prayer*, or such like, contrary to the scope of the place, which treats only of such as are in *Church-order*, and have committed to them the *power of binding and loosing*, which the *promise of Christ Iesus* his approving of the same by them; and besides, where in the *Scriptures* is *Christ Iesus* said to be in the *midst* of any, but his * *Churches*: And further, whereas the *Scriptures* speake of the *Church*, *Temple*, and *house of God*, applying these sayings to *believers* and such as are § *built upon Christ by faith*, these they wrest, and pervert in applying these titles to their *houses of lime and stone*, calling them the *houses of God*, and
Temples.

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Temples for him to dwell in, though the Scriptures be plaine to the contrary, as Stephen declared to the * Council long agoe, * *Act. 7. 47. 50.* and that from the testimony of the ‡ Prophet long before: and so our ‡ Saviour himselfe to the Woman of Samaria, denying ‡ *Isay. 66. 1.* for the time to come any such places, as the Jewes, and the Samaritans doted on, but tells her, and us, that *spirituall service* in § any place, as he saith himselfe, should please him, though it will not give carnall men content. Likewise are not the Scriptures alledged frequently by these learned men: for the nation and people for being the Church of God, and for the same end, nationall observances, as an High Priest consecrated and set apart for the services of the Church, and so under him the rest of the ho'y Priests with their holy garments, and tythes and such like for their maintenance, and for this purpose the Scriptures, alledged in a most plentiful manner, both from the Law and the Prophets, for the justifying of their names, orders, and administrations, whenas if it be spiritually discerned, and the Scriptures not wrested, nor perverted, it wilbe found true, as Peter † saith, that no. every Nation, nor any more any Nation, but in every Nation † *Act. 10. 14. 15.* them that feare the Lord and none other, are accepted of him: ‡ *Rev. 13. 7. with Rev. 16. 19.* Wheras Christ Iesus himself hath told us, that the * beast should have power over every kindred, nation and tongue, and that the nationall Cities should fill: wheras Mount Sion the City of God shall never be moved, as saith the ‡ Prophet, and also the Apostle; by this then it appeares that all such Scriptures as are alledged for the maintenance of a Nationall Church are perverted. Seeing that long since the Lord hath rejected it, Now accounting a Company of Saints in fellowship with himselfe, to be Mount ‡ Sion, that shall never be moved, and these he hath made ‡ *Rev. 14. 1.* § Kings and Priests to God. The like we may see in the Ministers, † *Gal. 4. 9* of the Church: seeing that they were of old time in that Church, to be honourable persons, in outward honour and esteem; for their names, Priests, for their callings, above the rest of the people, a distinct body of themselves; for their apparell, different in their administrations from other of the people; and so for their maintenance, by tythes, and offerings, all which had a respect to Christ, and were in him to have their end, as the Apostle † declares, as being but worldly rudiments. † *Gal. 4. 12.*

Yet these men, though they professe themselves Ministers of Iesus Christ, and under the Gospell, yet Childlike, as under tutors, and governours doe yet observe these things, after the rudiments of the world: and so suitably to the Gospell cannot abide

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2 Cor. 6. from
1. to 10.

Acts 2. 33.
34. 35.

† 1 Pet. 5. 1. 2.

abide to approve themselves to be *Ministers of Christ*, by such marks as his word affords, as we have * before considered, but they must be men of *honour*, and such as be distinct from others in their apparell, *maintenance*, and such like : *dishonour*, and *reproach*, and *nakednesse*, and living on meere *almes* they cannot brook : but they be so farre from *working with their own hands* for their own *necessities*, as the Apostle requires that the "*Ministers of the Gospell* should doe, as that they wrest the *Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets*, haling in as it were by the *bayre of the head*, the *Scriptures* to speake for them and their *delicious living*, *faring like Dives deliciously every day*, wheras the *Elders of Iesus Christ* should † *feed the flock of God*, not caring for it for *fily lucre*, but of a *ready mind*.

But leaving these things, and such as these are which declare them to be more suitable for *Moses* and the *Law*, which tends unto *wraith* and *bondage*, then such as are *Ministers of Christ*, and made partakers of the *liberty of the servants of God*.

Object. 1. with
the Answer.
† Job. 6. 68.

I will speake of some few things that are in difference among them and us. You know it is usually objected against us because of our departure, out of the † words of *Peter* to our *Saviour*, being these, *Whether shall we goe, thou hast the words of eternall life* : from whence is concluded against us, if the *text* be not *perverted*, that we in leaving them doe forsake *Iesus Christ*, wherein they take it for granted that He is with them, and not with those that forsake them : wheras the *text* is cleare to prove, *that the words of eternall life are in him*, as * himselfe saith also, *the words that I speake are spirit and life*, and this who denies but that *he that hath the Son hath life*, *he that hath not the Sonne hath not life* : But let not the *text* be wrested, yet what prooffe is here that *Antichrist* hath the words of *eternall life*, and that there is no forsaking of him, and yet all that know wherein the difference lyes, know that this is the *contraversie*, and how that these persons thus forsaking goe to *Christ*, and to the *word of eternall life*, seeing that the Lord * *binds the testimony and seales up the Law among his Disciples* : so that till it can be proved that these leave *Christ*, and forsake the words of *eternall life*, the *text* must be taken for none other but to be *perverted*, and a *vaile* drawn over it to beguile the *simple*.

* Isa. 8. 16.

Object. 2.

Upon this same head hangs another great exception against us, which is, *Where we had our Conversion (if we have any) if not among them? and so taking it for granted, that we had it among them, a great outcry is made against us as if we had stolen their gods, and done*

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done them great wrong, and for this purpose this amongst other things is alledged, that that Church which is able to beget is able to bring up.

Now for Answer hereunto, it is to be minded that conversion doth properly belong to the * word of the Lord: Now this word by which we are all begotten is the proper portion of the Church of God, as ‡ divers Scriptures declare: hence then must it needs follow, that whosoever are converted to the Lord, those by vertue of their conversion belong to the true Church, because as is before said, the word is hers, and therefore they are to cleave to her, and forsake those places, where they were converted, and that for this Reason, because the Lord himselfe is ‡ said to count whenas he writes the people that this man was born there, that is, in Sion, the Church of God, though that the man were converted in mans account in Babel, and Palestina; yet the Lord when he counts, shall write the converted man to be born in Sion his Church: Now all Gods people should count and write as God doth, and give Babel no honour at all of their conversion, because the Lord doth not give her any; and the same thing is abundantly seen in the converts, that they are " exhorted to leave those places where they were converted, and so they did, as the † Scripture manifests in many places, which might be noted.

Againe it is to be minded that God himselfe counts all the faithfull to belong to the * Woman, the Church of God, as appeares in the Revelations, where the Man-child as is evident by " other places contains all the faithfull, even the whole Church of God. This Son of God and his Man-child is called his ‡ people. The like appeares in Isay 66. 7, 8. where the Man-child is interpreted to be a whole Nation of Children, including all the faithfull. Now this woman is said to be in travaile crying; and if yours be that Church that is in this travaile crying, and in pain according to the Scriptures, I am content the Child shalbe acknowledged yours, but if it be in jollity, and without sorrow, putting the others to pain, and ready to cut the living Child in pieces, how then can I acknowledge it for the true Mother, whenas also the Apostle saith, that Ierusalem that is from above is the * Mother of us all, and she is not one that gendereth to bondage, but to freedome, as saith the Apostle, and therefore me thinks it appeares that every ones conversion strongly binds him to make speed to that Church which consists of such as are faithfull in Iesus Christ, a. being the proper inheritance to which they all belong, and to know that all such places as are alledged to conclude otherwise, be but wrested and perverted, though never so faire a glasse be set upon them;

Answer.
* Psal. 119. 7.
Rom. 1. 16.
1 Pet. 1. 3. 23.
‡ Psal. 147.
19. 20.
Mat. 13. 11.
1 Cor. 3. 22.
‡ Psal. 78. 6.

" Act. 2. 40.
† Act. 2. 44.
‡ 17. 4. 34.
* Rev. 12. 4. 5.
" Exod. 4. 22.
23.
‡ Exod. 5. 1.

* Gal. 4. 24.

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for God ever since the beginning hath put enmity betwixt the seed of the Woman and the seed of the Serpent, and accursed shall all they be that shall joyne thole together. that God hath so farre separated; and therefore let none of Gods servant stand with one foot on Mount-Sion, and another on Babylon, least that which is halting be turned out of the way. *Heb. 12.*

3 *Objⁿ.*

Another Objection against us is brought in the defence of your Ministry after this manner,

That Ministry that doth the worke of the ministry of Iesus Christ, spoken of in 1 phel 4. for the perfittng of the Saints, is a true Ministry, but your Ministry you say, doth the same worke, &c.

Ans^r.

Was it the worke of the Ministry of the Apostles, &c. to read divine service, Church Women Marry, and bury the dead, and such like services as there are? Did the Apostles *perfitt the Saints* after this manner? For who knows not but that this is the substance of what your Office of Ministry binds you unto? as for preaching that may be dispenced withall, and a little now and then may serve the turne.

2.

2 *Rev. 17. 3.*

Besides, as is granted, your Offices are not the same there mentioned that *Iesus Christ from on high gave gifts unto*, for you have others, that the *Scripture* speaks not any otherwise, then by the * *names of blasphemy*: But for the power and worke of the Ministry, which you say is answerable to that of the Apostles, by your gathering of the Saints together, taking it for granted that you say, *from what do you convert them?* If from the power of darknesse, as you would seem to imply, into the *Kingdome of Christ*, as ‡ did the Apostle, then by your own grant in the power of darknesse you found them, and the truth is, that where you found them there you leave them; when you found them before their conversion, you professed of them that they were regenerate and born anew, to what then do you convert them? or have you conversion after regeneration? you also bade these persons before, *to take and eate in remembrance that Christ dyed for them*, and so give them the *seales of life and salvation*. and yet after all this you being ministers to them, come to justify the truth of your Ministry by your conversion of these people, that have by these things no need of amendment, and yet when all is done that you plead for, they still abide in the same Church, under the same Ministry, in the same worship that they were conversant in before, whenas I have declared before, that whenas the Apostles converted any, those converts left their former places, turning from dumb Idols to serve the living God. Now it hath been long

3 *Col. 1. 13.*

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long since acknowledged and professed, *that the Worship of your Church, and the Ministry of it came out of the Popes shop, and must needs be reformed, or else the judgement of God cannot but light upon you, as hath bin manifested in the first and second admonition to the Parliament in the dayes of Queen Elizabeth, and all know that yet it continues the same that then it was, and if it were so bad then, as it is reported that a thousand Ministers said it was, small cause have any to plead conversion, whenas they shall continue in such abominations, as that the plagues of God cannot by their own confession be withheld: seeing that the Scriptures, and Spirit of God teacheth us, that the * feare of the Lord teacheth m n to refrain their feet from every evill way, and to cleanse our selves from all filthinesse both of flesh and spirit, and to grow up unto full holinesse in the feare of God, or the worship of God, as our Saviour ‡ interprets it, and to hate the very ‡ garment spotted by the flesh.* Now these things well considered, it will appeare that the severall Scriptures that are continually brought for the maintenance of your Ministry, are but as so many flourishes by which the word of truth is wrested and wringed like to a nose of wax, contrary to their proper intents and scopes to serve your own turnes, which who they be of you or others that are the perverters of them, God knows, and one day will judge betwixt the righteous and the wicked, and give to every one according as his workes shall be: In the mean while to me it appeares plain, that men destitute of Gods holy Spirit, be they as learned as may be in Mans-Learning, yet they do pervert all Scriptures to their own destruction, whenas the unlearned one, simple men and women having the Spirit of truth in them, shall rightly know them, and Gods mind in them for their great comfort.

Again, seeing this is so, that such men do thus pervert the Scriptures, this should provoke all that are made able Ministers of the Spirit as saith the § Apostle, that they take the same Apostles † advise, saying, *if thou put the Bretheren in remembrance of these things thou shalt be a good Minister of Iesus Christ: If thou put the Bretheren in remembrance of these things, What things: those things mentioned ‡ before, how that the Spirit hath foretold of ‡ from the Doctrines of Devils, how that men should speake lyes through hypocrisie, &c. as Zachary also foretold that the * Father and Mother of the Prophet should say, that he told them lyes in the name of the Lord: If thou put the Bretheren in remembrance of these things, because they are subject to forget them, and thou shouldst be their remembrancer, which if thou do thou shalt be a*

* Psalm. 119.

101.

‡ Mat. 4.

2 Cor. 2. 1.

‡ Jude 23.

4 Vse.

§ 2 Cor. 3. 2.

† 1 Tim. 4. 6.

‡ from the
1. verse.

* Zach. 13. 3.

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good Minister of Iesus Christ, which hath bin nourished up in the words of faith, and good doctrine; then marke, these things are not errors, nor lyes, nor he a false-teacher that speakes of them, but a good Minister that hath bin nourish't up in faith, and good doctrine, which was continually taught of Paul, and heard of Timothy, and to this is to be added what the Apostle * faith further in this matter, declaring that he that consenteth not to wholesome doctrine, that is according to godlines, is puffed up, and knows nothing, but dotes about words, and is such a one, as is so farre corrupted by the flesh, as that he is to be separated from: Therefore Gods good Ministers, as we see, should be carefull of these things as knowing of whom they shall receive their reward, and what shall also be their portion from men of the world in that which is ‡ death in the world, but ‡ life with the Lord: Be Faithfull therefore to the death, and you shall have a § crown of life, declaring the power of the Spirit of the Lord in you.

* Tim 6. 3. 4.
‡ Rev. 11. 7.
‡ Rev. 14. 13.
§ Rev. 2. 10.
¶ 1 Jn.
† 2 Pet. 3.
17. 18.

Now in the last place, I will conclude with the exhortation of the † Apostle in the words following, Ye therefore beloved seeing ye know these things before, what things? among others those, that worldly learned men are Gods unlearned men, being destitute of his Spirit, beware and take heed least ye also aswell as others (you being subject to it) be plucked away before you be aware into the error of the wicked, to thinke that Gods Mysteries cannot be attained to by mans learning, and so you fall from your own stedfastnes, which is, ‡ through Faith; for by Faith ye stand, and by the Spirit, for by it ye are also ‡ establisht: and for a preservative against this error, as opposite to it, grow and increase in the grace of God, and the knowledge of the Lord Iesus Christ, which is that that will preserve you from error. Now to Him be glory, not to us, nor to Man, but to Him our Lord Iesus Christ both now and for evermore. Amen.

* Rom. 11.
‡ Psalm. 51.

ISA Y 44. 25.

The Lord frustrateth the tokens of the lyars, and maketh diviners mad, turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolishnesse.

FINIS.

